

May
2026

Ø BEAT

PIKES PEAK RADIO AMATEUR ASSOC.



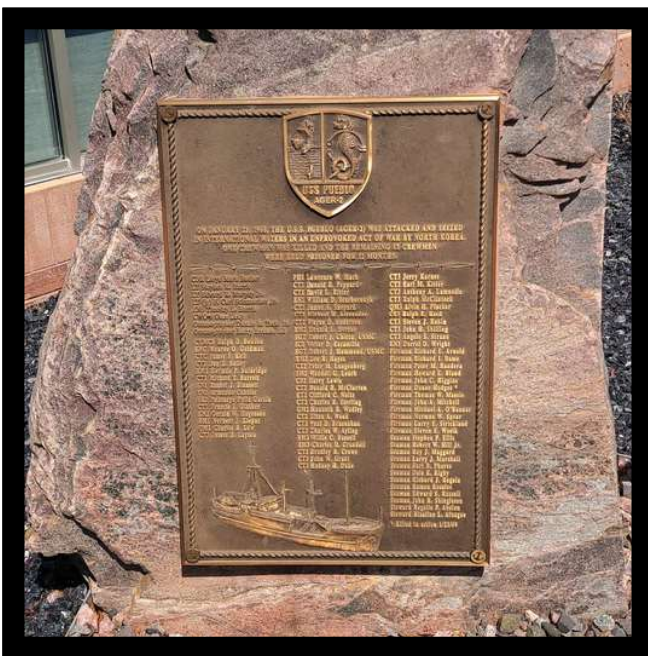
Museum Ships Weekend Event

Friday June 5, 2026 1800hrs to
Sunday June 7, 2026, 1800hrs

Location: Pueblo Convention Center

PPRAA will be activating the USS Pueblo Memorial again this year
We are looking for volunteer operators.
Contact Boardmembers@PPRAA.org for
information about participating in
Pueblo.

More info about the event itself Here.
[Http://www.nj2bb.org/museum/](http://www.nj2bb.org/museum/)



What's Inside

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- Board Member Spotlight
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- Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026
- Megafest!
- Save the Date

Contact Zero Beat

Do you have photos of PPRAA events you'd like to share, or news from the ham radio world that the club might like to hear?

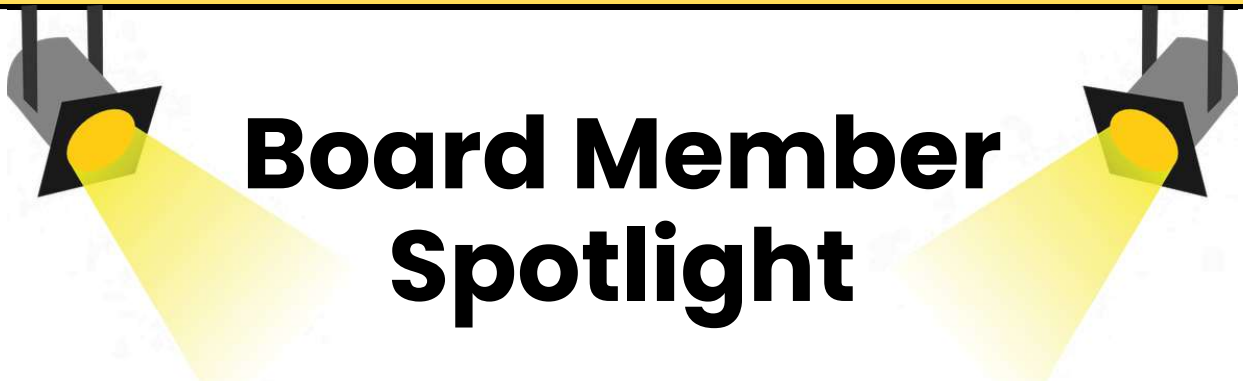
Please email
zerobeat@ppraa.org

MEGAFEST RAFFLE TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE!

To buy or sell tickets
Contact Leianna N7ZOO
megafest@ppraa.org
or (719) 271-2961

**YOU
ARE THE KEY
TO SUCCESS!**





Board Member Spotlight

Eric Jones /K9EAJ **Boardmember**

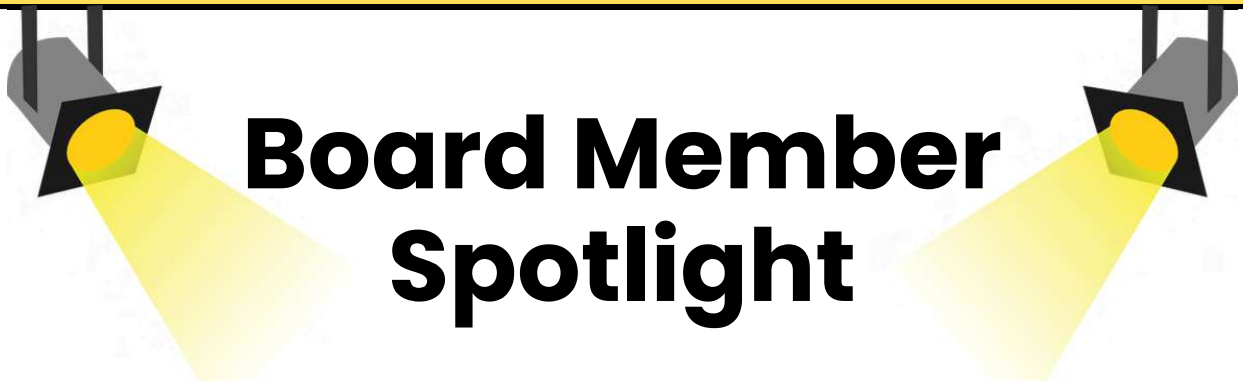
I caught the radio bug early in life, starting out on Citizens Band (CB) radio as a kid. I still remember being scolded by my dad when my CB adventures interfered with one of the three television channels we had at the time. That early fascination with radio followed me into adulthood when I joined the U.S. Air Force.

During my Air Force career, I gained experience operating, maintaining, and managing communications systems under the Department of Defense umbrella. My work included high frequency (HF), land mobile radio (LMR), air traffic control (ATC), and satellite communication systems. I earned my Technician and General licenses in August 2015 and upgraded to Amateur Extra in December 2015.

I joined the Pikes Peak Radio Amateur Association (PPRAA) in 2022 and became a board member in 2025. Being part of PPRAA has been both fun and rewarding, providing opportunities to meet fellow amateur radio operators, participate in club activities and events, and expand my skills and interests within the hobby. The club's diverse membership has allowed me to learn from both seasoned operators and newcomers alike—proof that amateur radio is always evolving.

What I enjoy most about amateur radio is meeting new people and continually learning and trying new things. Ham radio truly offers something for everyone who has an interest in radio communications.

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Board Member Spotlight

Board Member Spotlight cont..

While my interests are broad—sometimes too broad—I’ve come to appreciate having a wide knowledge base across many voice and digital modes, even if I’m not a master of any single one.

My current QTH features a 71-foot random wire as my primary HF antenna, supplemented by a loop on the ground, and even my home’s gutters as auxiliary antennas. I primarily operate HF using a Yaesu FTDX-10, with an Icom IC-7300 as a backup. For VHF/UHF operations, most of my antennas are discreetly

hidden in the attic due to HOA restrictions, though I also have a roof mount and several Yagi antennas that I deploy as needed.

My operating modes include VHF/UHF analog FM, DMR, D-STAR, System Fusion, VHF/UHF SSB, and AM. I currently work 1.25 meters with handhelds and may add a dedicated 1.25-meter antenna and a 220 MHz amplifier to reach 20–40 watts in the future.

When I’m not on the air, I enjoy spending time outdoors camping, hunting, fishing, and riding motorcycles.

Amateur radio has opened the door to new friendships, continuous learning, and countless opportunities to grow within the hobby. I look forward to many more years in amateur radio and expect it to remain my primary hobby as I continue gaining life experience—and hopefully a bit more amateur radio wisdom along the way.

FREE Radio Licensing Test Sessions
Second Saturday of every month
Testing begins at 10 am
Please arrive by 9:30 am
to get signed in and get
instructions.

Location: Pikes Peak Regional
Office of Emergency Management
3755 Mark Dabbling Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
ve@ppraa.org

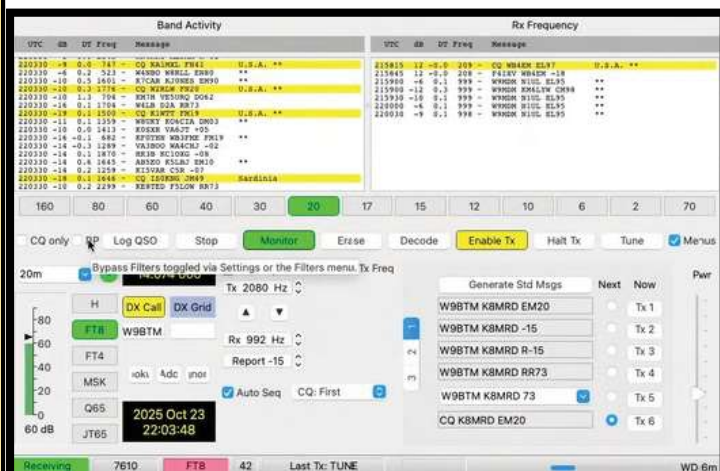
Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026

by LD Steiner / W0XLD

The Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS) developers have been quite busy in the first few months of 2026, updating many popular amateur-radio applications and bringing new features to life. Here's a quick survey of current and upcoming features in our favorite programs:

WSJT-X

One of the most popular amateur radio programs of all time, WSJT-X, which implements the famous FT8 mode, has recently been released as a new major version: 3.0!



Some highlights of new features include:

- Faster decoding with parallel processing
- Ability to filter out messages from stations already worked
- Reply-to-CQ automation
- "Wait" features, like "wait and reply," "wait and call," "wait and pounce"
- Full duplex mode (good for satellites and monitoring your own transmit)
- "SuperFox" and "SuperHound" features for DXpeditions
- A new message system to ask stations to change frequency if there's interference

JS8Call

The JS8Call weak-signal messaging application is back under high-speed development.

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Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026

Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026 cont.

Original author Jordan Scherer/KN4CRD has teamed up with the "JS8Call-improved" development team, giving his blessing to rename their highly-featured software as the official version of JS8Call. Version 2.5.2 was recently released, bringing features like:

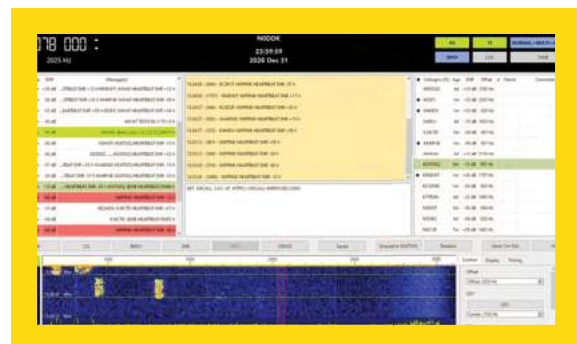
- Updates to the latest languages (C++), GUI toolkits (Qt), and audio interface software
- Improved decoder quality at low SNR, noise handling, and frequency tracking
- Auto-reply priorities have been improved
- Waterfall redrawing and averaging features
- External logging application improvements with support for the WSJT-X UDP protocol

But that's not all! The JS8Call developers are working on version 3.0, for which some documentation has already been produced. From this documentation, we can see that there is a new mode in work that's even faster than "turbo" mode.

"Turbo" mode will be renamed to "JS8 40," meaning 40 words per minute, and a new "JS8 60" mode will permit keyboard-to-keyboard conversations even faster than many of us can type: 60 words per minute, as its name suggests. With these kinds of new features, it's good to see the JS8Call development efforts blazing away, bringing us better capabilities and better compatibility with modern platforms.

FreeDV

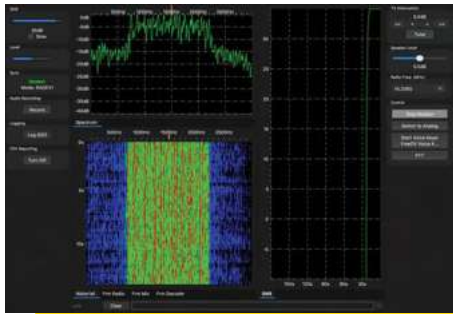
Free Digital Voice software has also been in rapid development so far in 2026, making its "RADE v1" compression algorithm available to end users as we've covered in previous months.



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Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026

Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026 cont.



Recently, the developers have posted a blog entry that shared audio samples being used for testing their newest iteration of their codec, "RADE v2," both over the wire and over the air. You can play back their audio files to hear that RADE v2 provides a slight improvement over audio quality of v1, with even less digital artifacting than before. But it preserves the full 6 kHz input bandwidth, so our sibilant "S" and "T" sounds are even more clear, for a still-more-improved natural sound.

But this audio quality improvement isn't even the most important characteristic of the new RADE v2 codec: it's that the output is now a digital carrier only 1 kHz wide!

this is a 33% bandwidth savings compared to RADE v1, and means we can now fit three fully-intelligible, no-noise-floor digital voice signals into the same space over the air that a single SSB signal occupies.

This improved codec is not yet available to end users in the FreeDV software, but if you compile your own, you might be able to help the developers test. However, the RADE v2 waveform is still changing as the developers finalize the standard and fix their last remaining bugs, so don't expect stability just yet. We should stand by for the official release, and then test it quickly: this new mode might give us big advantages in many areas of amateur radio, especially in emergency communications and poor band conditions.

Other FOSS software

Those three major digital-mode apps aren't the only ones receiving noteworthy updates so far in 2026:

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Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026

Free and Open-Source Software Updates in 2026. cont.

- "QLog" logging software released version 0.50.0, which adds split-detection for DXers working split, QSL label printing, and DXCC submission reports.
- "QDMR" is a code-plug editor for DMR radios that lets you avoid the major security hazard that is running proprietary software from China. Free-and-open-source support now exists for popular Radioddity, TYT, Anytone, and BTECH/Baofeng models. Version 0.14 (and the bug-fix followup, 0.14.1) recently enabled support for AM channels and GNSS settings, for HTs that have such features.
- "CHIRP" is HT configuration software for analog radios. It has added support for the newly-popular Tidiradio TD-H3 Plus and Baofeng UV-5R Mini, among others, in 2026.

It's been a great year for radio amateurs using FOSS already, but with these popular software packages in rapid development, it seems amateur operators have a lot to look forward to in the months to come.

PPRAA Megafest 2026 Sponsors!



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PPRAA.org/megafest

Contact

megafest@ppraa.org

or call Leianne N7ZOO

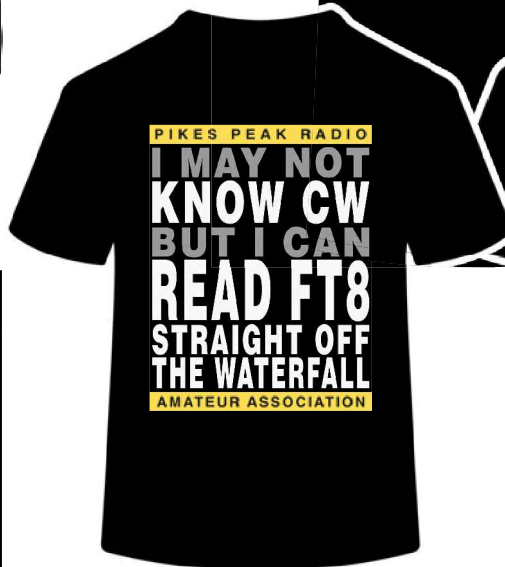
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Leianna Haas / N7ZOO
PPRAA Board Member
N7ZOO@YAHOO.COM



Megafest 2026



Mark Your Calendar



General Membership meeting (10 JUN 2026)

Location: Golden Corral

1970 Waynoka Rd, Colorado Springs

The business meeting starts at 7 PM, but you may get your dinner and beverage of choice and check in any time after 6 PM for a social hour. Club members check your email for info or email Officers@PPRAA.org to receive the Zoom information.



PPRAA Thursday 10m & 2m Nets -

- (28.390MHz SSB at 1900 MDT)
- (147.345+MHz, 107.2ctcss at 2000 MDT)

Thursdays- Weekly Elmer Breakfast -

Village Inn, 535 Garden of the Gods Rd.
Meet between 0730-0800

Museum Ships Weekend Event

- Friday June 5, 1800hrs to Sunday June 7, 2026, 1800hrs
- On Air and Pueblo Convention Center

Field Day

- Saturday, 27 June 2026 1200 to Sunday, 28 June 2026 1200

Vendors Wanted! Apply Now!



8:00am – 1:00pm
July 25, 2026



Lewis-Palmer High School
Monument, CO



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<https://www.ppraa.org/megafest>